

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 ERDA-05 OMB-01 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 SAM-01

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R 121958Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5113
INFO USMISSION USUN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION GENEVA
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
USNMR SHAPE
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 29478

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PARM, MPOL, FR
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SUBJECT: GISCARD INTERVIEW: ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMA-

MENT

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED BY LE FIGARO NOVEMBER 12, GISCARD CONFIRMED THAT FRENCH POLICY REMAINS UNCHANGED (AND NEGATIVE) TOWARD FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN CCD, MBFR, AND NPT. HE DESCRIBED FRENCH CONCERNS OVER POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT IN FUTURE OF ARMS OF MASS DESTRUCTION. HE UNDERLINED FRANCE'S SPECIAL ROLE AS THE WORLD'S "THIRD NUCLEAR POWER" AND HIS PERSONAL CONCERNS ABOUT NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION. FULL TEXT OF INTERVIEW HAS BEEN SENT TO DEPARTMENT BY SEPTEL. THIS CABLE CONTAINS INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF KEY STATEMENTS MADE BY GISCARD ON ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

2. CCD: "WITH REGARD TO GENEVA (I.E., CCD) OUR PRINCIPAL OBJECTION CONCERNS THE PROCEDURE OF THAT NEGOTIATION. THE NEGOTIATION CONCERNS DISARMAMENT, BUT THE USSR AND THE US ARE THE CO-PRESIDENTS. WE CONSIDER THAT THERE IS NO REASON FOR THIS CO-PRESIDENCY. THUS, WE FOLLOW THE WORK (OF THE CCD) FROM OUTSIDE. WE APPLY THE CONCLUSIONS ARRIVED AT IN GENEVA WHEN THEY SEEM TO US TO BE WELL-FOUNDED, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH REGARD TO THE DE-NUCLEARIZATION OF THE SEA BEDS. MOREOVER, WE ARE PREPARED TO APPLY OTHER CONCLUSIONS (OF THE CCD)."

3. MBFR: "WITH REGARD TO THE NEGOTIATIONS AT VIENNA (I.E., MBFR) THE PROBLEM IS DIFFERENT. OUR CONCEPTION IS NOT THAT OF THE MAINTENANCE OF A HIGH LEVEL OF SUPER POWER ARMAMENTS COMBINED WITH AN ARMAMENTS REDUCTION WITHIN A ZONE INVOLVING A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF EUROPE. IF THERE WAS A GENERAL REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS IT COULD BE APPLIED TO THAT ZONE AS WELL. BUT THE IDEA OF TWO BLOCS BRISTLING WITH ARMS WITH, BETWEEN THEM, A ZONE A LITTLE MORE EMPTY WHICH -- IN OUR EYES -- HAS ITS OWN SOVEREIGNTY APPEARS UNACCEPTABLE TO US. WITH REGARD TO GENEVA AND VIENNA THEREFORE, THERE IS NO CHANGE IN OUR POLICY."

4. FRANCE, THE THIRD NUCLEAR POWER: IN RESPONSE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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QUESTION "ISN'T THERE A CONTRADICTION BETWEEN OUR (FRENCH) ATTITUDE AS A NUCLEAR POWER AND THIS LACK OF MOVEMENT WITH REGARD TO DISARMAMENT?" GISCARD SAID, "IT IS PRECISELY HERE THAT THERE IS A CHANGE. I BELIEVE THAT, HENCEFORTH, FRANCE HAS THE MEANS AND THE OBLIGATION TO FULLY EXERCISE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AS A NUCLEAR POWER. IN THE PAST (FRANCE) HAS PRACTICALLY NEVER SPOKEN WITH OTHERS ABOUT NUCLEAR PROBLEMS. WHY? BECAUSE

THE FRENCH PREOCCUPATION CONCERNED THE PRIORITY OF CREATING OUR OWN NUCLEAR INSTRUMENT. WE FEARED THAT OUR PARTICIPATION IN DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE USED TO THEIR ADVANTAGE BY THE OTHER (NUCLEAR) POWERS IN AN ATTEMPT TO LIMIT OUR CAPABILITY TO ACQUIRE NUCLEAR ARMS. THAT IS WHY FRANCE HAS NOT PARTICIPATED (IN DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS). NOW WE ARE THE THIRD NUCLEAR POWER OF THE WORLD, FAR BEHIND THE TWO SUPER POWERS, BUT AT LEAST THE THIRD NUCLEAR POWER OF THE WORLD. WE MUST NO LONGER THINK AS A NATION SEEKING TO BECOME A NUCLEAR POWER, BUT AS A NATION WHICH HAS ACHIEVED IT."

5. NPT: "WE HAVE NOT TAKEN PART (IN THE NPT) AND WE DO NOT INTEND TO TAKE PART IN IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE ARE PARTICIPATING IN A CERTAIN NUMBER OF CURRENT STUDIES TO LIMIT THE FUTURE RISKS OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION. I

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MIGHT ADD THAT I PERSONALLY ATTACH VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE
TO THIS SUBJECT.

6. NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION: "... IT CONCERNS, HENCE-
FORTH, THE PROBLEMS OF LIMITING NUCLEAR DISSEMINATION IN
THE WORLD OR PERHAPS THE NEED TO REFLECT ON THE VARIOUS
DANGERS WITH REGARD TO NUCLEAR CONFLICT, DUE, FOR
EXAMPLE, TO ERRORS OR INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION. FRANCE
IS NOW IN A POSITION TO EXAMINE THIS."

7. FRANCE'S FREEDOM TO SIZE ITS NUCLEAR FORCE: "ON THE
ONE HAND, WE ARE NOT IN FAVOR OF NUCLEAR DISSEMINATION;
ON THE OTHER HAND WE ARE READY TO STUDY THE LIMITATION OF
CERTAIN NUCLEAR RISKS. BUT, GIVEN THE DISPROPORTIONS
OF OUR MEANS WITH REGARD TO THOSE OF THE TWO SUPER
POWERS, IT IS SELF EVIDENT THAT WE REJECT THE IDEA OF A
CEILING ON THE FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE. ... I TOLD THE
SOVIET LEADERS THAT THIS IDEA OF A CEILING WAS ABSOLUTELY
CONTRADICTIONARY TO OUR WILL FOR AN INDEPENDENT DEFENSE."

8. ARMS OF MASS DESTRUCTION: "... WE HAVE NOT SUB-
SCRIBED TO THE REQUEST TO PROHIBIT (NEW ARMS OF MASS
DESTRUCTION) MADE AT THE UN BY GROMYKO. WE TOLD MOSCOW
THAT WE WOULD EXAMINE IT IN A POSITIVE SPIRIT. WE HAVE
A DOUBLE INTEREST, INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL. INTER-
NATIONAL BECAUSE IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE WORLD HAS
NOTHING TO GAIN BY SEEING THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH ON
NEW ARMS WHICH WOULD BE RUINOUS FOR THE ECONOMIES AND
MORTAL FOR ITS EXISTENCE. NATIONAL, BECAUSE FRANCE,
WISHING TO ASSURE ITS INDEPENDENT DEFENSE, WOULD BE

OBLIGED -- IF NEW ARMS APPEARED -- TO GUARD ITSELF AND
TO TRY TO AVOID BEING A VICTIM OF THESE NEW ARMS.

9. COMMENT: WHILE WE DETECT NOTHING NEW IN GISCARD'S
STATEMENTS ON FRENCH POLICY CONCERNING PARTICIPATION IN
CCD, MBFR OR NPT, WE BELIEVE GISCARD IS SINCERE WHEN HE
SIGNALS (AS HE DID IN PARA 5 ABOVE) THAT HE IS PERSONALLY
TROUBLED BY CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE NUCLEAR ARMA-
MENT SITUATION. WE WILL HAVE TO AWAIT CLARIFI-
CATION OF WHAT HE MEANT (IF ANYTHING) BY HIS ELLIPTICAL
LANGUAGE IN PARA 6 ABOVE.
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